THE ARYAN PATH

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Point out the 'Way'
-however dimly and lost among the host —
as does the Evening Star
to those who tread their path in darkness.

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: *Gandhi Centenary Year* :

SUPPLEMENT TO
THE ARYAN PATH
November 1969

GANDHI AND PERMANENT REVOLUTION

By
Baldoon Dhingra
D. LITT.

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BALDOON DHINGRA

Gandhi and Permanent Revolution

[Dr. Baldoon Dhingra has long been Visiting Professor of Comparative Psychology, School of Economics and Social Sciences, Paris, and recently was awarded a Doctorate (*honoris causa*) by a Swedish University. He is well known to our readers by his frequent contributions. In the long essay we offer here as a special supplement, he has interpreted Gandhiji as a thinker of that revolution which the world always is in need of and which, perhaps unconsciously, the rebellious youth of many countries may be groping towards in its rough outbursts of impatience with the existing order.—ED.]

A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.

The hungry millions ask for one poem — invigorating food.

I have no special revelation of God's will, my firm belief is that *He reveals Himself daily to every human being.*

I am painfully conscious of all my imperfections and therein lies all the strength I possess.

If you would swim on the bosom of the Ocean of Truth you must reduce yourself to a Zero.

God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives.

Submission to the State law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission therefore to a State law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty.

The outward freedom that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment.

I hate privilege and monopoly.

Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the great thing in the world.

The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man.

Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish, it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her.

—M. K. GANDHI

"MY MESSAGE AND METHODS," Gandhi once said, "are, indeed, in their essentials, for the whole world." This is becoming evident each day; for Gandhian thought is being studied on a world scale and its methods adapted to current problems everywhere. The towering inward stature of Gandhi entitles him to be ranked among the Sages of mankind; for he made real the words of Lao-tze: "The way to *do* is to *be*." Emerson's lines:

> For he that feeds men serveth few,
> He serveth all who dares be true

might well apply to this little man who dared to be true.

Gandhi had no special gifts except a burning love of truth, which he pursued to the very end. He kept on experimenting on himself, liberating that atom of soul-force which resides in each of us. He earnestly believed that man could elevate himself by conscious endeavour and that the pursuit of truth alone could set one free.

Gandhi thus made his life worthy in its details of the contemplation of his most critical hour. Though many-sided, he applied himself to the hungry masses of India, and their plight drew his sympathy and his ire:

> We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food.

And again:

> To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages.

He referred to himself as a poor mendicant, with his spinning wheels, a can of goat's milk, some home-spun loincloths, and "a reputation which could not be worth much."

Gandhi said something which should find sympathy even among pure anarchists:

> Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality [by which he meant reason and common sense] is fit to be banished from the land.

Gandhi saw himself in each man and indeed each man saw a good deal of himself in Gandhi.

> Whenever I see an erring man, I say to myself, I have erred; when I see a lustful man, I say to myself, so was I once: and in this way I feel kinship with everyone in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy.

Being an ordinary man Gandhi tried to study the science of man and by trying all kinds of experiments on himself and by living both his frail and steadfast moments, he tried hard to associate himself with people everywhere; for Gandhi knew that deep down we are all the same, having the same sort of weaknesses.

He tried to find truth, but he knew that truth is the last thing most people want to hear, and that they will take elaborate precautions to keep it at a safe distance, lest it expose their devious ways.

Gandhi found peace by being able to act alone; for no-one can lead another to freedom. A man frees himself when he helps another free from a physical prison. It has been rightly said that people neither give nor receive anything of human value to one another except by abolishing the otherness of the other. All good example, like good advice, remains ambiguous until it is taken, and it is never really taken, but re-created by an enriching act of self-reference.

In keeping a day of silence each week, Gandhi tried to show to young and old everywhere that the wisest of men seem to press others on to growth only by silence.

To young men and women in different countries deeply concerned about the rapidly changing scene — war, explosions of one kind or another, asphyxiation, and dehumanization — what better mentor in their revolts can there be than Gandhi? If you want to conduct civil disobedience or non-co-operation and to understand the meaning of trusteeship, let Gandhi speak. "Civil disobedience," he once said, "is the

storehouse of power," but how and when must be based on truth and so is non-co-operation a marvellous method provided the right means are employed.

On trusteeship Gandhi had a colourful approach:

> All land belongs to Gopal: where then is the boundary line? Man is the maker of that line and he can, therefore, unmake it ... Gopal literally means shepherd, it also means God. In modern language it means the state, that is the people. ...
>
> What I would personally prefer would not be a centralization of power in the hands of the state, but an extension of the sense of trusteeship, as in my opinion the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the state.

Thus Gandhi supported the minimum of State-ownership, which is what Thoreau wanted, but to Gandhi all dilemmas of ideology had to be resolved through inner realization and not by external remedies.

To the young rebels of today weary of formulas, Gandhi's assurance may be welcomed: "I ask nobody to follow me. Everyone should follow his or her inner voice. In no case should he or she imitate others sheep-like."

Gandhi's strength lay in his sympathy and compassion for everyone. His light radiated beyond the frontiers of his own country. Because he loved so much he had cast out fear.

The word non-violence or *ahiṁsā* meant to Gandhi "infinite love." Young people will understand readily that they often, unknowingly, in Oscar Wilde's words, kill the thing they love. But the cry of some young people, however odd it may appear to some, is genuine: "Make love not war" was another way of saying: "Die to yourself, for in loving truly you would, through true surrender, true giving, find yourself." Young people of today can understand the meaning of Gandhi's words: "Reduce yourself to a zero."

Politics, Gandhi found, "encircles us today like the coil of the snake." So one must "wrestle with the snake." Gandhi wanted to spiritualize politics: a very difficult thing indeed. "Men say I am a saint losing myself in politics," he once said. "The fact is that I am a politician trying my hardest to become a saint." Which means that politics and religion — indeed, all disciplines and every aspect of life — were for Gandhi one and indivisible. It is because some people saw them as incurably divided that he was killed. "If someone were to shoot me," he said not long before his assassination, "in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi but one that appeared to him a rascal." The assassin's bullets killed Gandhi but not before he had saluted him and pronounced the name of Rama.

For Gandhi, evil is a stage in the process of development from individualism to universalism. Evil is the false conception of the self and its interests, and in proportion as this conception gets nearer to the truth, what was good a short while ago becomes inadequate — thus yesterday's good is today's evil.

Good is only another word for the thing that draws the self to the not-self, attraction: good is sympathy, friendship, love. Evil is repulsion, that keeps the self and not-self apart; it is enmity and hatred. But people only hate when they fear, only fear what they do not understand. All evil is, in the last analysis, based on fear, and fear on lack of understanding. That is why fearlessness, which Gandhi achieved, is the highest form of sacrifice, that of oneself. All good is based on love, and love on understanding, on a recognition of kinship. In proportion as understanding increases in the course of evolution, fear turns to love, evil to good.

Egoism and altruism are not antithetical, because the individual and the universe are not. Altruism is the true, properly understood egoism, because the true ego is not the little individuality but the universe, in which the former is included like a drop in the ocean.

Gandhi's childlike quality was irresis-

tible to those who came in contact with him. He set a higher value on the precious part of him, his feelings, rather than reason, the adaptation to the brutal facts of life. He became, as a true genius can become, the hermaphrodite of myth; at once man and woman, conceiving and begetting, bringing new and higher life, new truth and new beauty.

Love is the door through which the individual attains to an understanding of the universe. Love creates the spiritual child which in its turn inspires love in others. Love is the form under which all life whatsoever appears to man. Love is the fundamental law of Nature, whereas art is an outward form in which Nature manifests herself, a means which she uses.

Every age faces both backward and forward when the contrast between yesterday and tomorrow is as violent as it is today and gives rise to an unbalanced and inharmonious art. Youth makes the necessary elbow-room for itself to grow in and it is reserved to later generations to realize that all these trees that are fighting one another for sun and air-space form a unity, are in fact a wood.

Deep down in all of us there is sympathy with youth, because we all love our youth best: but we learn to realize that today's youth is tomorrow's age and the age of today the youth of the day after. The young and the old forget about this wholly, each pulling in different directions; for even among the young there are progressives, in a manner of speaking, and reactionaries. For the teenager, the youth of twenty-five already settled in life is a reactionary. He becomes one, despite himself, to some extent; for new responsibilities arise and these restrain his rebellious tendencies. The old order must yield place to the new.

Music and dance represents an extremely important part of the revolt of youth. The emphasis on dancing, possibly the oldest form of artistic activity, heralds a return to the beginning of art. This exuberance is a genuine form of artistic enthusiasm independent of cultural snobbery.

The contemporary problem, the revolt of youth, is an attempt to discover something more than European harmony. It is a spiritual equilibrium the young are after. A good deal of revolt, conscious and unconscious, is a desire to return to basic roots. This means that the Roman Church will need to accept Christ's teachings in their mystical and metaphysical sense: a drastic and immediate removal of so much paraphernalia collected over the centuries. The result: a harmony between Roman materialism and Christian charity.

The Christian ideal can be compared to the revolutionary ideal of Krishna, who, as a divine being, takes human form to right injustices upon earth. The ideals of Jesus and Krishna are always re-appearing with new and up-to-date arguments against the prevailing forms of injustice. They will go on appearing till mankind has reached the years of discretion; and that will not be for many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years.

Evolution demands constantly increasing sacrifices from the individual. All growth and, therefore, all life is based on unceasing sacrifice. At a low stage of evolution, the sacrifice is easy. The tree turns blossom into fruit and lets the fruit drop. The primitive organism splits in half without feeling pain. The higher the animal the more painful birth becomes and the greater the sacrifice of egoism that is demanded. Development proceeds at the expense of the natural impulses — that is to say, it earmarks an increasing amount of spiritual energy for unselfish purposes. Man, as opposed to the animals, has a surplus of spiritual energy beyond that needed for the satisfaction of his physical needs. It is the business of education and the aim of evolution to divert this surplus from the ego and render it subservient to communal purposes.

Gandhi believed he was meant to

"serve the poor dumb ignorant millions." The awakening of the Indian masses took place under different auspices from those in Europe. Gandhi's novel techniques, which the world now uses in different guises, were a landmark in the history of man's political struggles. He had an uncanny, mysterious gift which kept him at all times in tune with the prevalent feelings and emotions of India's inarticulate peasants. He was a barometer without which no co-ordinated mass movement in India was possible. His was a movement of total revolution, not just one aspect of it, but everything — for to Gandhi "the whole gamut of man's activities constituted an indivisible whole." Hence even the tiniest activity was governed by what he considered to be religion. He insisted that "he did not know any religion apart from human activity."

"Democracy," disciplined and enlightened, was to him the first thing, for a prejudiced and ignorant democracy could destroy itself. Rightly understood, democracy is real revolution; for it is an everlasting becoming, since no form of government can be permanently satisfactory. It must for ever become more universal; else, it comes to a violent end. For an ideal democracy is absolute universalism.

If we once reached the stage in which all human beings were not merely equal before the law but equal in ability there would be no government and no governed, nobody commanding and nobody obeying any longer; the moment would have arrived when distinctions disappeared; perfect equality would mean perfect fusion.

Parliaments, universities, economic welfare are all means to an end. But the democratic ideal will not be attained till the end of the world. It is a permanent effort.

Gandhi was a revolutionary *par excellence*. He waged unceasing battle against poverty, racism, hunger, disease, centralization, social injustice. The inarticulate masses also joined in the struggle. His weapon: self-purification. His techniques: non-co-operation and civil disobedience. The world recognized his moral qualities; his people hailed him as a saint; an assassin killed him; but the real Gandhi fights on all over the world. Gandhi's is a permanent revolution. Like the great prophets before him, he transcended himself by sacrificing his all, and thereby winning eternal life, becoming the universe. In this respect his revolution was like Christ's, of whom he said: "He dies and is resurrected from day to day. ... He lives today through you."

Most young rebels today are fighting for the things Gandhi fought for. He would ask them to join him in the fray. And they will.

"Imagination takes power," the students' clarion cry in May 1968, was a spontaneous outburst of which the deeper meaning was lost. For it is through the use of the imagination, or a power greater than reason, that force can be overcome. Blake, in words which recall Gandhi's, held that if a nation of warriors were confronted by a nation of *imaginative* men, the weapons of the former would fall unlifted from their hands.

Where mere intellect rules, as Prospero did over Ariel, there is wizardry and wonder: the reign of push-buttons and computers. But when Prospero's "charms are overthrown," and when Ariel and all he stands for is set free, the miracles of forgiveness and reconciliation begin. That is why Gandhi said: "One cannot forgive too much. The weak can never forgive." It is at such a moment that "Imagination takes power." We then have imaginative change, an imaginative revolution, or "the liberating power." Bernard Shaw once warned us: "The usual revolutions never lighten the burden of tyranny, they have only shifted from one shoulder to another." To Gandhi "those who have ousted the greedy by using the brute force against them, have in their turn become a prey to the disease of the conquered."

This slogan "*L'imagination prend le*

pouvoir" (Imagination takes power) has many intonations, rich and meaningful. Kant used the phrase. So did Ortega y Gasset: "Imagination is the liberating power possessed by man ... A people is capable of becoming a State in the degree in which it can imagine." To the students at Nanterre and Paris it was little more than a phrase. But if reflected upon it will take them to Thoreau, Tolstoy, Blake, and Gandhi.

What is the student revolution really about? Students are gradually feeling more united with students in other countries, as national identity is losing its grip. Thus they are coming to ignore national frontiers. There is the problem of anarchism. Gandhi was in favour of "Enlightened anarchy." He said: "Centralization as a system is inconsistent with a non-violent structure of society." When the young can no longer believe in what they are doing, they may go on doing it, but then something fundamental drops out of their lives, and they refuse to do it at all.

To Ortega technology is an empty form like the most formalistic logic and is unable to determine the content of life. That is why our time, being the most technical, is also the emptiest in human history. Man has two fields in which to work. He can invent devices to secure his well-being, using the materials and energies supplied by nature, but "he is also responsible for inventing *his own life*." His life needs creation as much or more than his habitations and conveniences for well-being on earth. Ortega speaks of "a crisis of wishing," of suffering from an appalling restlessness "because we do not know what to do with it, *because we lack imagination for inventing our lives*."

Macleish says what Marcuse says, only so much better. He speaks of a "technological *coup d'état*" — men and women of *imaginative sensibility* have seen that something was happening to the human role in the shaping of civilization:

> Cities were being built and rebuilt not with human purposes in mind but with technological means at hand. Thousands, nay tens of thousands of students today see the result, a gradual change in our attitude towards ourselves as men, towards the part we play in the direction of ourselves.

The society which the young rebel is against is "a population of consumers which can never compose a nation in a great, a human sense." No society can survive without a sense of meaning, which corresponds to Gandhi's revolution from within. This is the permanent revolution. "God did not bear the Cross 1900 years ago. He bears it today, and He is resurrected from day to day."

This present generation in Europe, for the most part economically untroubled, intoxicated by its sense of freedom, is frustrated by the manifest elements of authoritarian control in the world of politics and business. Are not authoritarian forms in universities predominant? The laws of capitalism, the profit motive, authority through ownership, the competitive society, the rat race — these are some of the questions.

What do they really want? They revolt as people have always done from Socrates onwards. They are looking for a new Jerusalem (see Blake, Thoreau, Tolstoy, Gandhi) away from outmoded habits of authority. They know also that force will meet force. But democracy must be understood afresh, for the young are children of liberalism.

For all these questions and those anxieties the permanent revolution of Gandhi has an answer in his definitions of democracy, authority, force. Gandhi's idea of "The Welfare of All" is deeply revolutionary; so is his attitude to authority and force.

Here comes in the true meaning of civil disobedience — "the right of every citizen.' Civil disobedience and criminal disobedience are two different things. A state has to put down criminal disobedience by force. But to put down civil disobedience is to imprison ourselves (see Thoreau's "Duty to Civil Disobedience").

Emphasis must be laid on the man "who rules himself in such a measure

that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour." This leads to true democracy and to Thoreau's idea: "That government is best which governs least."

Gandhi often used the language of myths. In so doing he helped to introduce man's sense of freedom as well as his commitments. They have a revolutionary quality in them because they call on one to die only to be reborn.

To Gandhi, and to Blake, the war in heaven was externalized symbolism, a story of the war within the human breast: for myths and symbols "are tools for the *active imagination.*"

"Self-government is a continuous effort to be independent of government-control." Thus Gandhi viewed

> an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear because while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.

Gandhi's concept of *satyagraha* is a philosophy of the right to revolution in a non-violent way. This concept has been diversely and successfully employed in many countries outside India, notably in the U.S. and in Prague. Gandhi made serious distinctions between judicious freedom and unrestricted individualism, which was to him "the law of the jungle."

Gandhi's revolution was meant to satisfy both "deficiency-needs and being-needs." Indignity was to be thrown off with poverty. Freedom was to replace foreign rule. Gandhi chose the revolutionary means because the being-needs to which he was devoted required him to do so: "... self-purification is a hundred times dearer to me than political work ..."

There is no point in drawing decisive conclusions about revolutionary methods and their results. "In principle the best revolution is one which does not lose its sense of a higher calling after victory is achieved."

Gandhi rightly feared that there were tendencies around him to create material plenty for a few to rise on the backs of millions.

"In a Satyagraha army everybody is a soldier and a servant, but his own general and leader." No sublimation is possible without self-sacrifice, the fundamental law of evolution. New life is always achieved at the cost of sacrificing a portion of the individuality. Everything that distinguishes man can only be produced at the cost of unceasing sacrifice in the interests of spiritual life.

William Blake once made a remark that applied to himself: "He whose face gives no light, shall never become a star." Gandhi's face too gave light. In like words Nehru said: "... for the light that shone in this country was no ordinary light." Einstein spoke of Gandhi as "so luminous a contemporary." Negro leaders have referred to Gandhi's life-work as the brightest beacon and inspiration: Mary Bethune, Martin Luther King, Corella King have all used in different moments the word "light" when referring to Gandhi.

But there is something else that Blake said which finds a parallel in Gandhi: Gandhi's stark humility and his desire to reduce his ego to a zero. How he would have loved Blake's words:

> O Saviour pour on me thy Spirit of meekness and love!
> Annihilate the Selfhood in me: be thou all my life!

All this has relevance, far more than we realize, in our understanding of various aspects of what troubles the young — a relevance that we do not care to discover. Gandhi, like Blake, knew that unity was essential. To him the world, religion, is all of a piece. The revolution of Gandhi was one of the heart, one of imaginative change. Why? Because vision, as someone once put it, uncreates evil by forgiveness. Harold Goddard expressed it pungently: imagination can not only cause that which was not, to be: it can cause that which was, not to be. It is this double power to annihilate and to create that

makes imagination the sole instrument of genuine and lasting (in contrast with illusory and temporary) social change. When governing intellect becomes the slave of imagination, true revolution, that of understanding and forgiveness, begins. It is the revolution of Christ and Gandhi, the total forgiveness.

According to Blake, as Dr. Goddard explains, reason or, better still, rationalism, creates a world in which reason becomes the setter of bounds. Now, there is no reason why we must or not set bounds so long as they come from within. Gandhi speaks about bounds too, such as we could put upon ourselves; for as Blake said: "Truth has bounds, Error none." But there is a tyranny of bounds imposed from the outside. That is what the State does, what political tyrants have been doing all along. Of the many forms of despotism, the mental is one. When cold reason enthrones itself as authority, there is furious enmity between those who ought to be friends and lovers.

Abstractions create divisions. Catchwords like Liberty, Progress, Justice, even Truth and Peace and Patriotism, have been made the last refuges of scoundrels. Religion, too — "religion" and "freedom" and "realization" can be had through drugs! All these things become opiates of the people. Gandhi saw the dangers:

> Rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence. Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone believing it to be God. Those holding views different from ours are not our enemies. Let us honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose as we claim for ourselves.

No revolution is of any value unless it takes into account the point of view of the other. That is why Gandhi insists that when we want individual freedom we must not forget that man is a social being, having adjusted his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast in the jungle. A mean has to be struck between individual freedom and social restraint. It will be noticed that most of the student revolts have been in democratic countries, or those, at any rate, that profess democracy. Gandhi was a true democrat in the widest and most profound sense of the term. It is worth while, therefore, listening to his views on the subject.

> A born democrat [says Gandhi] is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not ask anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched-up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not merely intended as a convenient party cry.

We all are revolutionaries in one way or another, for every kind of revolution is in the air. The form and shape of the revolution will depend on where we are.

Because our thinking is based on comparisons, we create artificial contrasts. The distinction between opposites, between Left and Right, is merely a matter of appearance. When we talk of absolute extremes we might well think of a circle, not of a straight line and the point at which it ends. It is the same with the antithesis between Left and Right: each is conditioned by the other and if all its implications are followed out Left becomes Right and *vice versa*. The antithesis between them, considered as an immutable principle, is a fiction.

These revolutions are based on con-

trasts and external classes. But there is yet another form of revolution, one based on reconciliation and concord. When the fury of people is directed against the rule of the incompetent, the latter always falls back on force. The result is oppression and tyranny.

Ever since the French Revolution the political life of Europe has been cleft asunder into two sharply opposed camps. The Right is said to represent reaction, the Left progress. Reaction as an absolute ideal means standing still; action as an absolute ideal means moving forward — no matter where. Both become absurd as absolutes. Reaction is as much a factor in progress as action. They limit each other, provoke each other, are parts of the same movement.

Nations and classes of society have their ages which are determined by their history, and their ideals vary accordingly. Young people, like young nations, have originality and initiative. Theirs is the spirit of enterprise, creative enthusiasm, passion, and generosity. They are in the process of becoming. They are the blossom. Nations with an older civilization have the experience and good taste. They are the ripe fruit. But nations have the defect of their qualities. When attention is directed to these, as usually happens when parties struggle, the result is a caricature. When that happens, one group or party sees nothing in the old but tradition-worship and authority, hatred of everything new, persecution of all who differ from them in opinion or faith, arrogance in every form — the rotten fruit in fact: in the young the others see nothing but licence and destructiveness, selfish ambition, will-o'-the-wisp enthusiasms, lack of character, and consistency — in short, immaturity.

Looked at from a higher point of view, youth and age are equally good, equally in the right, equally valuable at any time, and the same applies to the ideals of the Left and the Right. We usually award the palm to the ideal which represents progress to our generation, the ideal which caught our youth, by whatever name we choose to call it. The rigid distinction between generations is, after all, merely a methodical convenience.

Only those who stand outside the spiral can recognize it as such. The one thing that stands outside and above it, above life, is what believers call God or Truth or Beauty, Love. The knowledge of that brings death. It brings death in every sense of the word. It brought death to Socrates, to Jesus, and to Gandhi. It is through dying to ourselves, to the sense of power (what Greeks called *arche*) that they brought about a new kind of revolution. Many thousands have, in their own way, done the same. This kind of death is a flame that keeps on kindling. One can call it a change of heart, an opening of the eyes.

As a politician, Gandhi was fully aware of the claims of all three forms of revolution: of the reactionaries, that of the progressives, and the third which caused the other two to dissolve, melt away, because it sought harmony.

The trouble with the ordinary kind of revolution is that it becomes static, stiff, and arid. Even romantics can become just as static as classicists, as Goethe himself pointed out. Only the ever-renewing heart is not so caught.

Science had a hard time fighting orthodoxy. Now that this life-and-death struggle is behind it, it has itself become intolerant. It has rejected all belief along with religious belief, quietly denied the existence of everything reason cannot explain, and in a manner at once tyrannical and naive declared itself omniscient, so far as omniscience is within human reach at all. The miraculous, the poetic, it has dismissed as an old wives' tale. But this is precisely the domain of Gandhi, precisely the domain which in one way or another interests young rebels. They rebel against the rigidity of life in all its forms. Their weird, gypsy-like attire is just about as incongruous as Gandhi's was. It is the domain of living myths and symbols which modern science has

cast away and which the young have retrieved. It is not just a revolt: it is an attempt to get back the basic values. Dress and demeanour have matched the incongruities of life and its inconsistencies. This reaction of young people in the West is an attempt to seek solidarity with the poor and the downtrodden. This is highly revolutionary because it goes beyond boundaries and frontiers and recalls Gandhi's "I am part and parcel of the whole" and "I know that God is neither in heaven nor down below, but in everyone." Gandhi had to start with himself, next with his own people who had become "so helpless, resourceless and inert that he had to concentrate on serving them."

What did Gandhi want? He wanted the owners of the means of production to regard themselves as trustees of the property rather than absolute owners. His ideal was that there should be equitable distribution, by which he meant that "man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural wants and no more." He wanted a decentralized society of innumerable village republics producing primarily for local consumption. The aim was to enable every individual to have his minimum needs supplied. This notion did away with aims of an affluent society. It is not that society cannot be affluent but rather that affluence is not a necessary condition for a fruitful and meaningful life. Gandhi wanted a non-acquisitive society dedicated to the twin concepts of economics and justice.

Public morality is supposed to establish gross equity in relation to the practical satisfaction of deficiency-needs and to serve being-needs by a hands-off policy. When it fails in these the revolutionary situation will sooner or later emerge. Man's being-needs demand the satisfaction of his children's deficiency-needs. Or, as Gandhi put it, God dares not appear before the hungry man except as bread.

Let us recall here that Gandhi, before he asked revolutionary Indians to seek liberation through non-violence, identified himself entirely with the plight of the oppressed. How else could he propose further sacrifices to them? And so it is with the agony of those who turn to violence in their revolutionary struggle. Anyone who feels able to prescribe revolutionary methods to them has first to suffer their pain. This is not a question of *abstract* right but of what men are entitled to ask of other men, in moral language.

If a society reaches the point of knowing that the people are starved for being-needs, and does nothing about it, the result may well be a wide-spread revolt of youth — and it is then too late for the society to naturalize them by its general programme of self-deceit. The effect of inner deprivation can no more be avoided than the violence of a revolution.

Youth today feels that a violent revolution is the answer since deficiency-needs are not being controlled by being-needs. Gandhi warned us that "*a violent and bloody revolution*" would take place unless there was "*a voluntary abdication of riches.*" To become human we must think of a permanent revolution. These words of Gandhi are of inestimable value:

> One cannot entrust men with a collective right to revolution unless one is prepared for them to revolutionize their lives from day to day: one should not make the ultimate act of revolution without willingness to see the new institutions perpetually improvised from below; the withering away of the state must begin in the progress of changing the state; freedom must mean freedom now.

BALDOON DHINGRA

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

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